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ABSTRACT

One of a series of 20 literary magazine profiles written to help faculty advisors wishing to start or improve their publication, this profile provides information on staffing and production of "Phoenix," the magazine published by Scotland High School, Laurinburg, North Carolina. The introduction describes the literary magazine contest (and criteria), which was sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English and from which the 20 magazines were chosen. The remainder of the profile--based on telephone interviews with the advisor, the contest entry form, and the two judges' evaluation sheets--discusses (1) the magazine format, including paper and typestyles; (2) selection and qualifications of the students on staff, as well as the role of the advisor in working with them; (3) methods used by staff for acquiring and evaluating student submissions; (4) sources of funding for the magazine, including fund raising activities if applicable, and production costs; and (5) changes and problems occurring during the advisor's tenure, and anticipated changes. The 1984 issue of the magazine is appended. (HTH)

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AN EXEMPLARY HIGH SCHOOL LITERARY MAGAZINE: PHOENIX

Compiled by

Hilary Taylor Holbrook

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Janet P. Hunter
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INTRODUCTION

In 1984, the National Council of Teachers of English began a national competition to recognize student literary magazines from senior high, junior high, and middle schools in the United States, Canada, and the Virgin Islands. Judges in the state competitions for student magazines were appointed by state leaders who coordinated the competition at the state level.

The student magazines were rated on the basis of their literary quality (imaginative use of language; appropriateness of metaphor, symbol, imagery; precise word choice; rhythm, flow of language), types of writing included (poetry, fiction, nonfiction, drama), quality of editing and proofreading, artwork and graphic design (layout, photography, illustrations, typography, paper stock, press work), and frontmatter and pagination (title page, table of contents, staff credits). Up to 10 points were also either added for unifying themes, cross-curricular involvement, or other special considerations, or subtracted in the case of a large percentage of outside professional and/or faculty involvement.

CS 209 713

In the 1984 competition, 290 literary magazines received ratings of "Above average," 304 were rated "Excellent," and 44 earned "Superior" ratings from state contest judges. On the basis of a second judging, 20 of the superior magazines received the competition's "Highest Award."

As a special project, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills has selected 20 magazines from those receiving "Superior" ratings to serve as models for other schools wishing to start or improve their own student literary magazines. The profiles of these magazines are based on the faculty advisor's contest entry sheet, the judges' evaluation sheets, and interviews with the faculty advisors. Where possible, the magazines themselves have been appended. Information for ordering copies of the magazines is contained at the end of each profile.

PHOENIX

Scotland High School

Laurinburg, North Carolina

Principal: Paul W. Sullivan

1984 Faculty Advisor: Kate Blackburn

Current Faculty Advisor: Janet Hunter

Student Editor: Angie Burgin

Fabled ashes
on wings of brilliant gold
glide wtih renewed youth
and beauty.
A spark ignites
and dampens the song
until Apollo illumines weary skies
and other ashes fly.

-"Phoenix"
Lynn Graham
Scotland High School

Scotland High School is a four-year public school located in Laurinburg, a rural community of 16,000 residents in the south-central part of the state. The school's 2,100 students come from primarily rural and economically disadvantaged backgrounds,

and the student population is about 50 percent black and 50 percent white. For over 13 years, these students have written and published award-winning poetry and short stories in Phoenix, Scotland High School's literary magazine. The students and staff are proud that such writing comes from a rural school "located 100 miles from everywhere."

FORMAT: PHOENIX

The 1984 issue of Phoenix measures 8 1/2" by 7" wide, with 64 center-stapled pages. The black cardstock cover is illustrated with a silver-ink bird holding the title of the magazine--set in block letters--in its talons. Staff credits are printed, also in silver, inside the front and back covers, and "Phoenix" appears as the signature poem on the back cover. Within the magazine, the text is printed on 70# Hammermill opaque and 70# Hammermill enamel (coated) paper. Works are set in English Times typeface: text in 10 point, titles in 18 point bold, and authors in 12 point italic. Black and white drawings, including linoleum block prints, are placed throughout the text.

The first and second place winners of several literary competitions are printed in a center section of 12 enamel-stock pages, with third place and honorable mention winners on the adjacent pages. The competitions include local and district levels of the Women's Club Arts Festival for fiction, nonfiction and poetry; "Best of the Book" for poetry, short story and short nonfiction, judged by faculty members of St. Andrew's College (Laurinburg) and Pembroke University (Pembroke); and the

International Reading Association Literary Contest for short stories and poetry.

PRODUCTION: SCOTLAND PUBLICATIONS

Phoenix is produced by Scotland Publications, the journalism program at Scotland High School. Although the magazine itself is several years older, the consolidated publications program is only in its third year. In addition to producing the school's yearbook, a monthly newspaper, a weekly column in the community newspaper, and the football program, the students in the program are responsible for the management of the literary contests.

Approximately forty students participate in the elective publications class, for which any interested student may apply. Admission is based on writing ability and photographic/artistic ability. Students in the class are involved in all the publications, under the direction of advisor Janet Hunter. Class members also meet after school hours on deadline days.

With the exception of about 3 percent of the writing done by faculty, all writing comes from student submissions, and all editing, artwork and layout are done by publications staff. Paste-up and printing are done commercially.

SUBMISSIONS: PRIZE WINNERS

Any student may submit a work for consideration by the Phoenix staff, and students are very much aware of the opportunity. Submissions are solicited by means of announcements--from English teachers, in the school newspaper, and on the public address system. Publicity surrounding the literary contests draws attention to Phoenix as well. Works are

then evaluated for publication by the editorial staff selected from among the students in the journalism program.

In addition to the awards given to works prior to publication, the 1984 issue of Phoenix received more individual awards from the North Carolina School Publications Association competition--held at Chapel Hill--than any other high school magazine in the state.

FUNDING: FRIENDS OF PHOENIX

Scotland Publications receives no funding from the district, and so must rely on contributions from the community to meet publication expenses. Phoenix staff members solicit a substantial network of "friends," businesses and private individuals, for contributions to the magazine. All contributors are listed at the back of the magazine. Although the magazine does not generally accept advertising, the 1984 issue includes an announcement of new releases from the academic press of St. Andrew's College, a small Presbyterian school in the town of Laurinburg.

Approximately half of Phoenix's $1,500 publication budget comes from donations, with the remaining 50 percent coming from advance sales of the magazine. Scotland Publications produces the magazine at a cost of $4.00 per copy, for a press run of 250, and sells it for $3.00 each.

PHOENIX: CONTINUITY

Ms. Hunter, who has been advising only since 1985, did not have an opportunity to work with the previous advisor before assuming her duties. She acknowledges that lack of experience with the publication process does pose problems from time to

time. Fortunately, many students remain in the publications program for more than one year, and the continuity of student staff has been quite helpful. Overseeing production of three separate publications is a monumental task, and it is much to the credit of Ms. Hunter and of Ms. Blackburn--the previous advisor now on leave of absense--that the final products are of competitive quality when resources are limited.

Considerable credit is also due to the students in the publications program, each of whom demonstrates a commitment to journalism, the production process, and high quality writing. With its award winning authors and dedicated staff and advisor, Phoenix will, no doubt, continue to soar.

**

Copies of Phoenix may be obtained from

Scotland Publications

Scotland High School

1000 West Church St.

Laurinburg, NC 28352

Cost: $3.50 (includes postage)

Editor: Angie Burgin

Advisor: Kate Blackburn

Secretary: Carol Tatum

Typists: Amy Allen
Lorri Chavis
Carmi Debnam
Darcy Dye
Lynn Graham
Billie Johnson
Ann Manning
Donnalyn Nisbett
Paige Parker
Nancy Pearson
Jill Potter
Carol Tatum
Nicki Weisensee
Starlyn Williams

Artwork: David Barrentine
Kevin Blalock
Charles McCallum
Art and Drafting Classes

Proofing: Lynn Graham

Judges for "Best of the Book":

Nonfiction Prose: Professor J. H. Roper, St. Andrews

Short Story: Dr. Edna Ann Loftus, St. Andrews

Poetry: Professor Grace Evelyn Gibson, Pembroke University

PHOENIX

1984

Volume Thirteen

Scotland Publications

SCOTLAND PUBLICATIONS
BAGPIPE - PHOENIX - SCOTSMAN
SCOTLAND HIGH SCHOOL
LAURINBURG, N.C. 28352

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Dreamer

The wicked, sticky, concoction doubt
attacks a cynical nondreamer,
And bulkily mucks conveted expressions
of individual choice.
Instinctively and skillfully it seeks the
victim's intellect.
Clouding ideas in its murky wake.
By sneakily creeping into conversation
it coyly expands to epidemic capacity.
But when doubt carelessly collides with
the keen mind of a dreamer,
Slowly but surely it is silenced
For a dreamer strives to slyly suppress
doubt in achievement's shadow,
By freely slaying life's impossibilities with
firm but fluid effort,
Until suddenly all challenges are simply
flattened into a memory of gallantry.
And we are saved from villainous
doubt once more.
God bless dreamers.

Gray Gilbert

Questions

A splinter of the milky moon, emerging
From fleecy silver clouds
To cast a magical shimmer
On the ominous depths.

The magestic searching breakers, becoming crashing surf
That thunder their confounding questions.
The desolate dunes reply with only
The meek rustling of sea oats.

The sea surges toward me, dark, solitary, and wild.
We seem so alike-the ocean and me
And I ask why.
In the distance, the lonely cry of a wayfaring gull reveals
The answer.

Miles Dean

My Formula Of Life

Life is a process of ups and downs, repeating itself over and over. It can be graphed on a Cartesian plane, with X as the scale of time and Y depicting emotion. It would probably look like the function $Y = 4\cos(2X + Y2)$ or again, the function $Y = 3s$ in $2X$, maybe even like the function $Y = \cos X + \sin 2X$. Whichever the case may be, it is complicated like the formulas above, yet at the same time so simple when looking at the overall effect -- just continuous ups and downs.

My life has a unique formula. Each incident in my life is made up of an X and Y coordinate. And only I know the exact abscissa and ordinate. It would be most easy if I gave my life function as my autobiography, but it wouldn't make much sense to others. Even Douglas F. Riddly, who wrote my calculus textbook, would not be able to analyze its complexity.

An easy way to get the picture of the overall effect of a function is to plot some points on the graph and connect them. In order to illustrate parts of my life on the graph, here I share a few X and Y coordinates; life incidents that can be plotted on the graph.

I recreate the past by sliding down the X axis of time...dates with boyfriends, winning in track meets, being on High Honor Rolls...field trips, trick-or-treating, birthday parties...learning to write my name, playing hide-and-go-seek, listening to favorite bed-time stories...the memories go back so far and deep.

The moments when I was small enough to sit on my father's lap have melted into memories of feelings. In my vague memories of those times, there is one event which will forever be clear in my consciousness.

Grandma's place always gave me a feeling of security. Cozy and cheerful, it was the most comfortable place in the world. The kitchen was full of cookies and cakes, the closets were stuffed with old toys. Grandpa would be sitting by the warm fireplace smoking his pipe, and Grandma would be busy baking in the kitchen. Everything was full of satisfaction.

It was one of these happy days at Grandma's--I was coloring my coloring book, and watching Scooby Dooby Doo on T.V. I sensed the crisp smell of chocolate chip cookies coming from the kitchen, so I put down my crayon to go see if they were ready for me to crunch.

As I neared the kitchen I heard my mother shouting with fury. Something crashed to the floor. My heart missed a beat. I wasn't concerned about cookies anymore.

"You don't understand-", Grandma was sobbing.

"Who doesn't understand!", my mother hollered back.

I stood stricken by the door. I sensed hatred between the two I loved so much and it shattered my small heart. But more than that, it scared me to see grown-ups fight and lose control of themselves. I'd always thought that grown-ups were perfect and were the ones who took care of everything. Who would then help Grandma and my mother? Who would comfort them after the fight? And would they still take care of me? The thoughts terrified me. I needed someone to give me a hug and tell me it was all right. I wanted to be assured that what I'd seen was a mistake. I went to Grandpa. But I was shocked to see in him a loneliness I'd never noticed before. He looked old and tired. His eyes were sad and I felt something deep concealed within him. I didn't want to grow up anymore. I didn't want to suffer like them. I looked around me and saw the whole house, a hidden misted place of uncertainity.

As I move back up the X axis, growing older, those pains I saw in other people's lives begin to take form as reality in my own life. I meet many new threats to my life. Incidents in the fourth quadrant increase.

I swallowed hard as I watched the car disappear down the street. My mother was still waving. I tried to blink back my tears. I wanted to run and stop her. I wanted to tell her I'd changed my mind. I didn't want to live in this dreadful place by myself. I didn't belong here at all. Mrs. Ueyama closed the door, shutting out my view of the car. She had closed the door leading to my past, she had shut out all the dear memories. The door stood there as a barrier, I stood helpless and lost.

"Your room is on the third floor. It's the first one on your left. The bathroom will be across from there, so you can wash up before we eat."

I nodded. I tried to say something, but the words only choked me. My heart was heavier than the luggage I carried. I thought I would collapse. I staggered up the steps. The stairs seemed endless.

I reached the room. It was small and empty, but not as empty as my heart. I sat there and stared, stared at the new life I had to face. There was no choice for me. I had to accept it.

"Dinner is ready!", I heard Mrs. Ueyama call.

I quickly wiped my tears with my sleeves and descended those flights of stairs.

"Well, how do you like it here?" Dr. Ueyama asked.

"It's..."

Horrible! Horrible!, the voices within me cried.

"...okay.", I answered.

"I know you must be lonely, but before long you'll grow out of that feeling. This place will be just as good as home."

I stood there clinging to his words. Those words were the only hope I had.

Learning how to live my own life was incredibly hard. New responsibilities were showered on me. Although I tried to keep myself pulled together, I'd often fall apart not being able to meet the requirements of reality.

My computer program had to be turned in by tomorrow. It was already a day late.

RUN.

INVALID COMMAND.

Invalid command! It had to work! I'd just fixed that part. My whole body felt stiff as I pressed the key once more hoping, just hoping, it would work. It was a minute past four. I knew Amy and Nobu were waiting for me outside.

RUN.

ERROR IN 200.

I felt myself collapse. I had to go. Amy and Nobu couldn't wait for me forever. I felt their impatience strike me as I rushed up to them. We had to hurry. We had five minutes to get to the station. The train pulled away slowly just as we ran out onto the empty platform. High tension silence accused me. Computer commands circled in my head. I felt dizzy.

We arrive an hour late for our appointment. The modeling agent met us without a word. His censure was upon me. The cameras flashed at me, threatening and menacing, forcing me to smile. I was deceiving my own feelings, but the cameraman didn't care.

"Turn around...Smile...That's it! Look this way...wonderful!"

I was drowning in despair.

I picked up the phone.

"Hello, this is Kristin. Could you tell the dorm parents that I can't make it back by nine because I've got to finish up this modelling job."

"You'd better speak to them yourself. Hang on..."

"Hello?", I head the ice-cold voice of my dorm parent.

"Mr. Clark, I'm in the middle of this-"

"You didn't sign out today," the voice cut in.

"I didn't have time-"

"You had phone duty today."

"Oh, I forget-"

"And you are supposed to be back here this minute."

I heard the cold click of the phone. I was falling, falling into failure with no one to blame but myself.

"ERROR IN 200!", the computer cried.

"SMILE!" the camera man mimicked.

"IRRESPONSIBLE!" my dorm parent prosecuted.

There are so many hopeless moments. Life so often seems to be completely ruined, hopeless, wrecked.

The sudden swerve of the car awakened me. I heard my own shrill scream sound in my head. "NO! STOPPP!" I was too stunned to scream.

Each second was alive as we crashed into two trees. I felt myself being thrust forward. Cracks ripped through the glass windows spreading out like carefully planned spider webs. Then it all came shattering down on us, merciless and cruel. The following minutes were dead. Lifeless silence overtook us, no one dared to move. I opened my eyes to find myself smothered with blood.

"Mama...Papa...", I gasped.

No one stirred. Aunt Mary Ann lay beside me, motionless. I saw her face and it took away my breath. I shut my eyes tight. I tried not to think, but it kept coming back. I saw myself struggling defiantly through life on my own, and people around me were praising me for my dauntlessness. Then I started to cry. I knew I wasn't brave enough. But what if...just what if...I shut out the rest.

"Oh, mama...papa...please..."

Blood was streaming down my face. I didn't care. I just didn't care anymore.

At moments like these, there seems to be no way out. The Y coordinate drops into negative infinity. I surrender, abandon, give in, and give up, but I can't get away. Somehow I always find myself struggling back up again. And when I make it to the top, it is like taking a deep breath of fresh air early in the morning when the soft pink glow lightens the eastern horizon. I feel an inch taller and I walk with a pound more of confidence. Then the sun rises and pulls the Y coordinate up, up, above the X axis until it has moved the full distance of its amplitude.

I can never forget how astounded and happy I was the moment my fourth grade classmates jumped at me shouting, "SURPRISE!". The classroom was dressed with ribbons and on the blackboard in big white chalky letters was written, "Goodbye and Good luck, Kristin". All my classmates had signed their names. It bewildered me, for I never expected it. I didn't ever think I deserved it. And because of those innocent feelings, it surprised me so, that to this day I can not get over the shock.

Come to think of it, things had been a little peculiar and a little abnormal since the week before. There had been a day when I walked into the class early one morning right into the middle of a class meeting. They'd chased me out saying school hadn't yet begun. Funny, how I never thought about it twice and walked right out. Then I remember those extra big smiles my friends gave me for the next couple of days. I never suspected a thing.

"Kristin, Kristin! I'll help you get some books for your term paper. Let's go to the library!", my best friend Caroline said to me during lunch on Friday. I thought it odd for a minute that Caroline wanted to actually help me do something. But I thought it would be better to take advantage of her offer than question her and lose the opportunity. Pam and Debby came over, "Kristin, are you doing your term-paper after lunch?"

How in the world did they guess! But that thought didn't occur to me then. All the while I was doing my paper in the library, classmates came to check if I was doing okay.

"Sure, Sidney and Seth found me six more books, I'm doing perfectly fine." I'd tell them and then they would scurry out of the library. I thought everybody was so nice to be concerned about me. I never questioned why.

"Isn't it almost time to get back to class?"

It seemed like we'd been in the library for almost an hour, and Caroline was still helping me find more books.

"Are you silly? It's only been five minutes."

Now, even I could tell that it had not been just five minutes. Just then, Jas came running in.

"You guys! You're twenty minutes late for class! I've been looking all over school for you. Mr. K's really mad."

Wasn't it a little peculiar that Jas had been here ten minutes ago, asking me how my paper was turning out! But I'd forgotten about that.

"Caroline! I told you-"

"C'mon. Hurry, let's go."

We ran into our classroom, breathless. Mr. K was showing slides to the class.

"Oh, Mr. K, we're so sorry-", I started to say when the lights switched on and everyone sang out "SURPRISE!" The tables were covered with cakes and cookies, and Lisa gave me first choice for the cup cakes she had made. Mr. K gave me a goofy smile and my friends smothered me with hugs. I'd never felt so good in my life before.

The X axis continues on and on...there is yet more to come. My function twists and turns endlessly. There are more points in it than stars in the heaven. How can five stars make up the universe? How can five incidents make up my life?

"Then write a better autobiography by which people can judge you", my English teacher could say.

But life is full of ups and downs. Words are inadequate. Life is a secret formula...private...personal...secret.

Kristin Altman

Singing Memories

Flicking the switch
the room begins to rock,
"Helter Skelter,
Helter Skelter"
Lyrics dance to
a steady beat.
"I'm soooo tired,
I haven't slept a wink"
The melodies sway,
rocking me gently into night.
"Who knows how long
I've loved you? You know
I love you still"
Rhythm flows around me
and draws a picture of him.
"Ob ladi, obla da,
life goes on..."
The memories stir
as salt stings my eyes
"I think of you,
the things you do"
Blue notes engulf me
and I float on my tears.
"Yesterday--all my troubles
seemed so far away"
I slip into a dreamworld,
"Now it's time
to say Goodnight"
and my emotions sleep
as I think of him--
"Let it be, Let it be"

Emily Teal

One Lonely Day

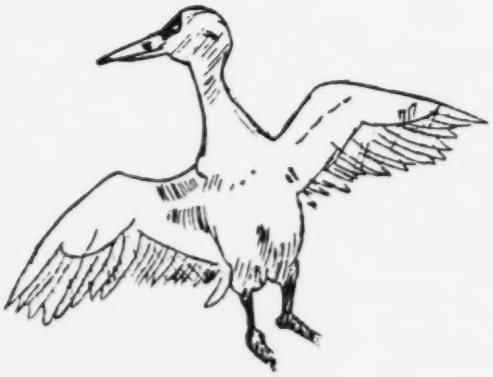
When walking down a snowy path
One cold and lonely day
I met up with a black-tip crane
And I began to say

Oh, black-tip crane, oh black-tip crane
You're out this cold day--Why?
Why do you flee from your warm nest
And this was his reply:

Oh, little girl, sweet little girl
Protect me from this snow
My wife and kids today did freeze
I have no place to go.

Together, then, we laughed and played
And danced the whole day through
And while we danced and laughed and played
His black-tip turned to blue.

Maria Gilbert



Nocturnal Nemesis

Nocturnal Nemesis
Breeds violent vision
and day life is forgotten.
The Leper gropes for my spinning head,
pieces of his flesh fall to scattered heaps
that sizzle on the earth's surface.
A most bitter stench wrenches my brain
forcing me to turn.
I am faced with a bare and gnarled tree
ominously flailing, it snatches
an anxious vulture and devours.

Seized by a maddening fright
I scream for the firm hand of consciousness.
When all is lost I am blessed
with the fortune of awakening.
I'm able to turn my pillow
to a dryer side.

Gray Gilbert

Him

He's captured my heart,
Invaded my dreams,
Disrupted my life
My every dream,
Wish,
Desire,
Centers around
Him.
I love him,
Worship him,
Treasure him.
His smile,
His words,
His. . .anything
Inspires me.
And you know the saddest,
Most ironic
Part of all. . .
He doesn't exist.

Nicki Weisensee

A long, crimson rose
Standing alone serenely.
Petal by petal I pluck
Longing for a quiet peace
And softness to surround me.
The petals float away.
I grasp but to no avail
Hope lost forever
As I stand alone
To live with my thorns.

Lea Anne Walker

Silver Coin

If I were a quarter,
would you save me
in a money jar
and wait and wait
and watch me grow,
or spend me on a
pack of gum?

Donna Clewis

Lisa Howard

In Memoriam

Thousand
A thousand shoots wakened
the still night air
as a thousand priests watched
the heretics burn
dark rings against the sky
A thousand times

Billy Weisensee

Dreamers

A blackbird's feather is floating
on a lazy breeze.
I see the sunlight filtering
through green leaves.
I watch you walking, talking
by my side
We reach up and we
kiss the sky.
Ooo-ooo we're the dreamers.

Billy Weisensee

Planet Plain

Planet Pain
the blind
lead
the blind
into
empty spaces
fade
and come
again
quickly but
slowly
eyes reaching
rapidly
something breaks
the
rhythm

Paul Bullard

A small blond child, clad in curls
Bounces by, dolly and stroller in tow.
Suddenly baby fat hits hot asphalt
Sin sizzles
And molasses thick blood oozes.
Dolly has not a thing to lose.
Tugging a curl, she wakes up the girl,
Realizing *deja vu's,*
The mirrored memory
shatters true.

Kristian Allen

In The Beginning

In the beginning GOD said, "Let there be Light,"
And there was light. GOD smiled.
In the beginning GOD said, "Let there be Night,"
And there was night. GOD smiled
In the beginning GOD said, "Let there be HEAVEN,"
And there was Heaven. GOD smiled.
In the beginning GOD said, "Let there be Stars,"
And there were STARS. GOD smiled.
In the beginning GOD said, "Let there be Sun,"
And there was Sun. GOD smiled.
In the beginning GOD said, "Let there be man,"
And there was man. GOD frowned.

Brandon Coble

The Triangle

There she sits like a flavorful flower
with "love me, love me not"
thoughts growing through her head.
There they sit, one like a guard
smothering her like a captive,
the dreamer, seeking to find an only
love with her.
She obeys the guard
dreams with the dreamer,
but the "love me, love me not"
thoughts are still there.

Amy Allen

I Am The Night

I am the night
Color me black.
Pierce me with stars
Scrape my back.

Blind my eyes
Choke my breath
Stain my heart
Lick me with Death.

Strangle my current
Twist my tide
Flush all innocence
'Till death has died.

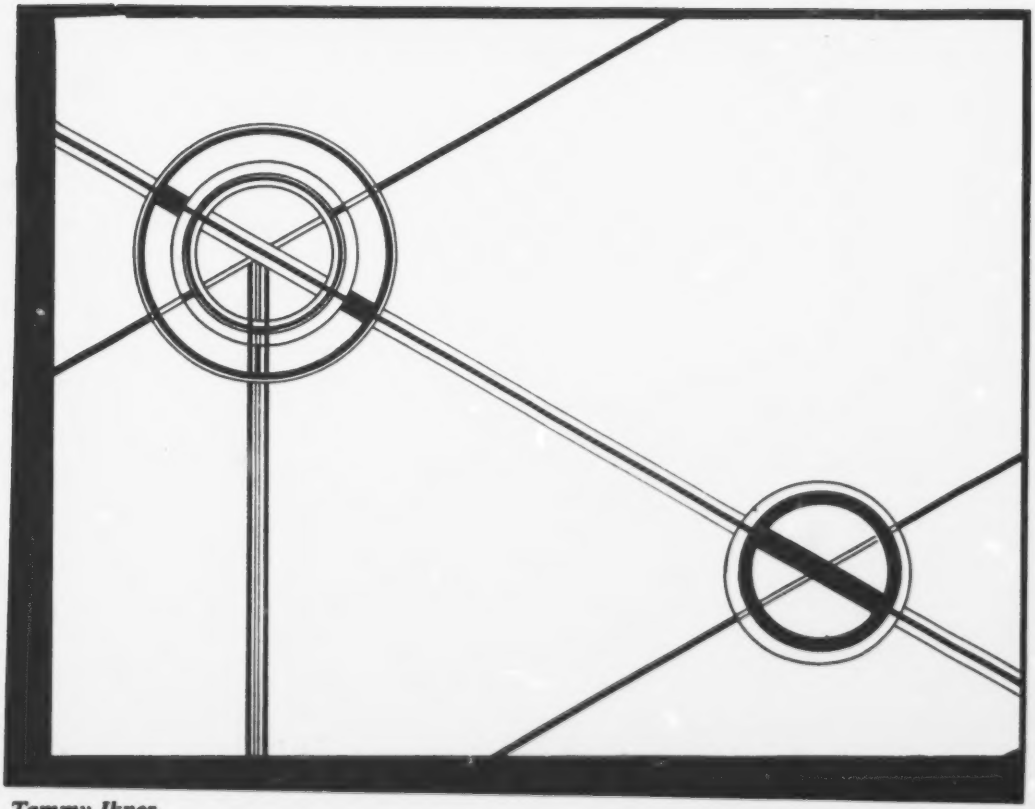
Award the Reapers
On their Grim attacks.
For they are night
Color them Black.

Tammy Batts

Upon An Adult

Here a wrinkled man must rest
Laid to sleep among the best:
Please be quiet, make no noise
For in the earth, a soul is poised.

Lindy Jewett



Tammy Ikner

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 7-9 Poetry Competition
Third Place — Local

Rainbow

I hear the rainbow.
In its former life it was
a gentle shower
of raindrops
on my roof.
Fill the deadly silence
with your soothing sound.
Loneliness erased
if just for now.

Sue Bush

Kevin Blalock

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 10-12 Fiction Competition
Third Place — Local

Lullaby

Tired and disheveled, Mala squats before the dying embers of the campfire. She hears the soft whining of the horses in their corral and the growling of the dogs as they fight over their meager scraps of meat. As the aroma of coffee and chatter of adults around the main campfire reaches her, Mala is filled with an utter sense of loneliness. She shivers and huddles closer to the warmth. Soon her younger sister would bring her her own cup of coffee. As she puts her hand on her swollen belly, Mala realizes that the kicking has stopped and the slow pull of the contractions have begun. She knew that it was almost time. She reminded herself to tie the knots on her gown for the baby might come this very night.

Lifting the heavy tarp of the wagon cover, Kage quietly enters with the hot cup in her hand. Giving Mala a gentle smile, she relates the activities of the day. Mala sighs wishing that she too could share in the happenings. Though she had only been confined for a few weeks, the days were endless. She could feel Kage's restlessness for they both knew tonight would be filled with magic and laughter. Mala suggests that Kage bid her goodnight.

With a small handbrush, Mala slowly begins to untangle her long, dark tresses. She hears the joyful celebration raging in the woodland meadow. How she longed to be with Petri, her beloved husband, and her children Sonji and Mika. Memories of Petri and his powerful yet gentle presence warmed her heart. The soft strains of the music brought thoughts of her wedding day - how long ago it seemed! Certainly longer than its three years. A strong pull grasped Mala's middle then slowly subsided. Her own growing hunger brought tears to her eyes. Life was difficult for her clan. Survival depended on stealing and begging. A feeling of shame and guilt envelope her as she realized the sad fate of her children. Soon the midwife would come and another child would join the illfated clan.

Hours later Mala lies in the wagon cradling her crying son. Mala sent the midwife for water and the loneliness again filled her heart. Petri will be proud of his strong, healty son - a night of music would celebrate his birth. The baby's cries become muffled and then nonexistent under the weight of the straw pillow. Mala once again cradles her son singing him a lullaby.

Kim Ormand

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 10-12 Poetry Competition
Third Place — Local

Young Widow

Alone I stand in the frozen cemetery
the taunting whispers haunting me.
I roam restlessly among the toppling
gray memories.
My lungs ache with dead air.
Death and sorrow hold me.

Kim Ormand

Kevin Blalock

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 10-12 Short Non-Fiction Competition
Second Place — Local

The Playground

Knees, bent painfully against the slippery bar, support my body, allowing me to savor the dizziness, happiness, and fun. . .upside down. Swinging slowly, I mildly observe my playmates running topsy-turvy across the playground. Like a jubilant stallion, the see-saw bucks the giggling children, making them bump their heads on the clouds, while the infants waddle to the sandbox, brightening the scene. The swingers, ready to fall into the sky, play near the sand pile, as I wait for the tiny kernels to fall out of the box. My face scarlet, I watch the older children sway uneasily on the grassy ceiling as they jump semi-merrily onto the ring of tell-tale dirt around the merry-go-round. In my own little sanctuary, nonchalantly regarding the hustle-bustle world, I feel the drops begin to fall.

I scurry from the open air to a bench under my favorite oak tree. Sitting on the bench, dreading the next drop, I watch as all of my friends grasp the hands of their sacred guardians. One by one, hand-in-hand, side by side, they march dutifully, performing the ritual of the puddled playground. The formerly "bite-size" rides now seem ominous and mute. The rain, putting a muzzle on my afternoon, causes little rubber-shoed raindances to occur here and there within the fenced-in wonderland. The muttering echoes chime in my ear as high-pitched stories escape from shapeless mouths. Like a glistening lily pad, I await the final cloudburst when my glory will be drowned.

Angie Burgin

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 10-12 Poetry Competition
Second Place — Local, Honorable Mention - District

Remembering Anna K.

I open one eye
Cinders
Metal
Sky
The earth smells sad.
I wonder who
Will scrape my body
Off the tracks.
What a morbid mess.
The Southern,
Bound for Georgia
Rolled in right on time

True the whistle sounded
And the lights flashed red
As a force deep within
Drew me
Lured me to kneel
With smooth, safe, steel.
Meeting little resistance,
The thundering wheels
Seemed strangely slow
Time slipped into a warp
And so seeming,
Ceased to be.

Kristian Allen

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 10-12 Fiction Competition
Second Place — Local, Second Place — District

The Janitor

The janitor's footsteps echoed loudly as he slowly rambled down the lonely hall. The monstrous building screamed with a deafening silence. Wheeling steadily behind him, the trash barrel seemed to be tied to a leash.

All of his work was completed; garbage collected, windows washed, and floors cleaned. The janitor stopped suddenly, breaking the rhythm of his melancholy journey. He glanced nervously behind him. No one was there. He stared at the office door handle almost enviously. "Go ahead!" it urged him. "Go ahead!"

The key fit in surprisingly easy. The janitor opened the door routinely, as if he had done it every day for the past twenty years. The inside room was pitch dark. The janitor moved knowingly over to the desk and sank gratefully into the cushioned chair. It was such a relief...to have the world at his feet. "I'll get that coffee in a minute!" his secretary crooned sweetly. Yes, this was the life. A nice office, influential friends, a successful career -what more could anyone ever ask for?

Business papers piled up on his desk, the phone rang incessantly and there were so many places to be! Yet, he loved it. He loved the excitement, the action, the challenges. The trivial things in life bored him. That's what the little people were for - to take care of menial tasks he had no time for. They were the nameless objects that made no impact on anyone's life. He was deep in thought. "Where's my coffee?" he demanded gruffly.

No answer.

"Coffee!" he reiterated, still deep in concentration.

Looking up he saw only the silhouette of a garbage can. His hands began to shake and his breath came in short gasps. "Where did everyone go?" he screamed in agony.

His terrified voice reverberated throughout the skeletal hallways.

Slowly the janitor regained his composure and rose to his feet. He walked over to the doorway. Turning around slightly he calmly uttered, "Good night friends, I'll see you tomorrow."

The clicking of the janitor's shoes made the only sounds in the entire building.

Julie Bush

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 10-12 Fiction Competition
First Place - Local; Second Place - District

Keg Party

John lifted the final shiny metal barrel out of his trunk with a grunt. After rolling the keg down the hill to the picnic table, John surveyed the scene with satisfaction. On the picnic table were enough snacks to feed the Red Army and the three kegs held enough Coors to quench the thirst of many a high school senior.

He tapped the kegs and, to be sure they worked, had a cup from each. As he was draining his third cup, the first guest arrived.

Sheila Lawford was his stunning girlfriend of four months. Sheila was a girl whose destiny depended on her stunning good looks. She was going to go to college to get her MRS from a guy with enough money to treat her like a princess. John was the child of working class parents and he knew their relationship was doomed.

"Hello, love of my life," John said. She smiled, fixed his collar, and gave him a kiss that was prematurely ended by the arrival of Jim Wilson and his girlfriend.

Jim was an excellent high school athlete. He lettered in three sports, but lacked the ability to succeed on the college level. He was one of those guys who peaked in high school and would never excel in anything except softball as an adult. John was sure that in ten years Jim would be hanging out at the bowling alley, cheating on his wife the same way he cheated on his girlfriend, and bragging about his high school exploits. Jim and John had never been especially close friends. They had operated under an uneasy truce, each grudgingly respecting the other for his area of excellence.

"Howdy, Superstud," John said, "Help yourself to the beer and some munchies."

"Sure," said Jim. "Which keg is mine?"

John laughed and helped himself to another brew. As he drained that cup, Arthur Pennington and Louise Thompson pulled up. John couldn't help snickering as the "perfect prep pair" sauntered over to the pier where the party materials were set up. Arthur and Louise were very similar to Jim Wilson despite totally different backgrounds. They, like Jim, would never match their high school success in their adult lives. They were destined to marry and never quite be able to afford the country club lifestyle they considered their birthright.

"Dressed for success, I see," John said as he served them a beer and helped himself to another. Looking up he saw a long line of cars and braced himself for the evening to come.

Howdy, What's happening...

It's finally over alright...

Second door on the left...

Glad I'll never have another class under that old witch...

We finally got out...

Yeah, Second door on the left...

Man, he's really bombed...

Lord, I hated her...

Hey, break it up guys!...

Just because you're dating me, don't mean you can run my life...

Well maybe we should call if off then...

Second door on the left...

Yeah, I'll see you during the summer...

Take it easy man...

He was standing on the pier staring at the darkness of the water. "I know what everybody else is going to do with the rest of their lives, but I don't even want to be a catcher in the rye," he mused. He was brought back by the sound of a high heel on a wooden plank.

"Hi, John," she said.

"Howdy, Barbie."

"I was the last one here, so I thought I'd check on you."

"I'll be alright, but thanks for looking after me," he said.

"Well I guess I'd better go. I told my folks I was going down to the beach tonight," she said with almost no conviction.

"Why not stay and head down with me in the morning. I could sure use the help."

"Okay" she said smiling and putting her arm around him.

The sunlight off the lake hit John in the eyes, waking him. Barbara sighed and readjusted herself as he leaned up on one pillow.

"Not a bad way to start off," he said as he pulled the curtain shut and relaxed.

Trey Thurman

Stephanie Hutchins

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 10-12 Poetry Competition
First Place — Local

The End of the Game

"Half of what I say is meaningless,
but I say it just to reach you..."
J. Lennon

As I settled in to watch the Pats and Dolphins
battle for the all-important conference lead,
he crouched in a dreary, Sin City black hole
clutching Holden's muffled scream for direction and
the autographed disc he would never hear.

While I munched my popcorn, alert to the game's hardest hits
but blind to the blow that would cripple me,
he stepped out, reverently called, and shattered the
imposter that lived in the arcade mirror of his mind.
Then, he p'litely stood with the pretty little p'liceman
while waiting for the van to come.

I yawned, idly cussed Cosell, and waited for the final gun.
Suddenly, "JOHN LENNON HAS BEEN SHOT.
JOHN LENNON IS DEAD!"
The shocked announcer's voice could not reach him
for there is nothing to get hung about where nothing is real.

I was a whirlwind of anger, confusion, and sorrow;
my mighty vocabulary was cut to a single word, "Why?"
He was the calm among the storm he caused,
because now he could be the Walrus.

Trey Thurman

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 7-9 Poetry Competition
Second Place — Local; First Place — District

An old black Ford sits

there in the yard,

with tires flat.

An old man sits

on the porch,

gazing at his youth.

Daniel McRae

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 10-12 Short Non-Fiction Competition
First Place — Local; Second Place — District

The House

The cold, cracked miniature sifts clear memories through my mind as I think of the shelf where it used to stand. The bookcase, room, house, yard, and cottage out back hold savage-sweet memories of my childhood. The pitter-patter of little feet come back to me as I remember the cold, concrete floor of the washroom where "Greatmama" tenderly washed her dresses by hand. From the rickety shelves full of broken, shattered relics to the picture of an African woman painted on the ceiling, reflections of dear Uncle David come rushing into my mind.

The old three-story house, like a velveteen-covered photo album, brings back memories of tales of an age I never knew. Reflection tapes of the entire mansion play back in my head, but the one never-ending that haunts my mind is the staircase. Dark and sinister, it dominated the benevolent air of the rest of the house. A long tongue, lapping up the boarders onto the second floor, the thirty steps, poorly lit, provoked curiosity, wonder, and fear. As a child loves a grumpy grandfather, I loved the old staircase. The stairwell, my playmate, the echoing hall my confidant, I spent my post-infancy bounding down the steps. When I toddled into the door of the house, a frenzied dash was made for the elegant banister, the afflictor of the dirt stains on the seats of my pants.

As the bottom fifteen steps were my beloved friends, the top fifteen were the objects of my utmost fears. Eventually, though slowly, I conquered them. My rare visits "up there" constantly held something new for my naive mind. The landing between the two stories sprouted oakwood wings onto the two sections of the floor, introducing a Vincent Price wonderland. There was the infamous "door that was always locked," the "top floor apartment where the strange woman lived," and the ancient scent of bygone colognes in every room reminding frequent visitors of past decades, lives, and heartaches.

Though the stairs brought out joyfulness and fear, the rest of the house was bright, silent, and antiquely peaceful.

The yard, a securer of tranquility, gently kept the serenities timelessly trapped in an acre of Kelly green. The infamous ivy-covered cottage, my first home, dominated the scene with a gently calming beauty.

Throughout the entire estate, scents, sights, and feelings, like a closing treasure chest, tempt the mind to recollect. A strangely familiar undertone surrounded the house. Little signs--the threadspool two feet lower than the "grown-ups" screen door handle. The brilliantly red birdhouse, the forever-hold pocket watch, and all of the special times that the big rooms held--told of a warm, loving family. . .from a member of the last generation to know of it.

Angie Burgin

Best of the Book
Short Non-Fiction

The Wind Woman

My grandmother's house in the hollow lay "a mile from anywhere"--so everyone said. It sat in a grassy valley looking as if it grew up there like a wild, brown mushroom, instead of being built like other houses. To reach the house you traveled a long, green lane almost hidden from view by an encircling growth of young birch trees. My mother called it the lonesomest place in the world, but I don't remember it that way. I loved the house and its memories.

My company relied upon Grandma, her large, grey cat, the trees--Adam and Eve, Peter the rabbit, the cardinals, and of course the Wind Woman.

Thomas, the cat, looked handsome with a dark gray coat, huge owl-like eyes, and fluffy fur. He crawled into my open arms like a sleepy child and cuddled me. Adam and Eve were the two spruces in the front yard. We named them Adam and Eve because they stood alone in the lush, green yard except for the small apple tree between them. Peter was a wild rabbit that wandered out of the woods every once-and-awhile to hop into my grandma's lap. Grandma wove magic spells around her and the cardinals flew to her open window and ate while telling her their secrets. They loved her as she sparkled with her charm and gentleness.

Some people thought her "touched" in the head. It wasn't true. She possessed an imagination and passed this gift to me to help me face life as I grew older. I'll never forget her words...they were some of the last she told me. "Whatever happens to you, don't let anyone take away what I have given you...imagination. You will need it...I am sure."

My special friend at Grandma's I named the Wind Woman. She blew in between the trees here. She looked tall and misty, with thin, silky clothes flowing about her and wings like a bat. Her eyes shone like stars looking through her long, loose hair. She could fly--but she walked with me across the fields at night. She was a great friend of mine--the Wind Woman.

Walking outside alone she would wait for me, ruffling the little spears of striped grass that stuck up stiffly on the lawn. She tossed the big boughs of Adam and Eve, whispering among the misty green branches of the birches, playfully teasing them.

At Grandma's house I played hide-and-seek with the Wind Woman. Anything could happen there. The realness of the Wind Woman surprised me; if I could just spring quickly enough around a cluster of spruces--only I couldn't--I could see her as well as feel and hear her. There--that was the sweep of her grey cloak. No, she laughed in the very tops of the tallest trees as I chased her until suddenly, the Wind Woman fell asleep and everything became bathed in stillness.

My grandma, a wonderful chum...once upon a time. I kept the promise I gave her..once upon a time. Sometimes I think I've lost it...imagination...but I realize I only misplaced it when I hear the Wind Woman playing outside. She reassures me as she did once upon a time...with Grandma.

Courtenay Bailey

Women's Club Arts Festival
Grades 7-9 Poetry Competition
First Place — Local; Second Place — District

The Piano

Fingers fumbling frantically

over the keyboard.

Fragile, tattered music propped against

latticed wood

Hints a song hidden in the clanking chords as

Salty frustrations are shed in hopelessness.

Meg Vandenberg

Best of the Book
Poetry

A Great Change

A wide path
Worn by many travelers
The heavy gallop of a horse
Along the way,
A game of marbles in the sand
A kerosene lantern
Dimly lighting the boarded house.
Then, suddenly
With a wink of an eye
Long highways
Lines down the middle
The roar of a speeding car
The continuous beeping of Pacman.
An abundance of lights
Sparkling
Showing the vast design of
A skyscraper
Today, tomorrow
I dare not wink again.

Clara Smith

Best Of The Book
Short Story

The Last Inning

He sits alone-withered, adorned in gray, unshaven, unkempt. Two sad eyes, pocketed deep in sunken wrinkles, struggle to penetrate the void of the city. His eyes rapidly race from one scene to another, but still he slumps. From the park bench he tosses bread crumbs to the pigeons. He glares at them, untouched by their clownlike cooing.

Children dance. Their shrills of laughter echo in his head. He stares, but sees nothing more than an unconcerned crowd. An October wind rustles the changing leaves. He blinks and shakes his head in bewilderment. His eyes focus on a runny-nosed kid in a baseball cap cradling a glove, wandering carefree towards the park bench. Wrinkles disappear and his squinted eyes gradually open. The laughter of the children and the rustle of the leaves vanish. He poises on the edge of the bench...remembering...

> "Six to three and bottom of the ninth - the bases are loaded and there are two outs. Number six, Dan Harte, is warming up in the batter's circle. The crowds are chanting - tension is building - a homerun is the Yankee's only hope. Harte takes a quick glance at the scoreboard and steps up to bat. The pitcher hurls a fast one right down the middle - Harte swings - and he hits it! There it goes - right over the left fielder's head--and it's--out of the ballpark! Dan Harte has just won the World Series for the Yankees! What an awesome comeback! The crowds are going crazy, the team is going crazy...this is certainly a day to be remembered! Dan Harte...Congratulations. Your team loves you, the crowd loves you. You'll never be forgetten..."

The silence is interrupted by a soft voice. "Mister, aren't you the famous baseball player that won the Wor..." A lady appears and snatches the boy away.

"Don't you know you are never to talk to strangers?" Her whisper is harsh.

"But mom, he isn't a stranger; he is on one of my old baseball cards."

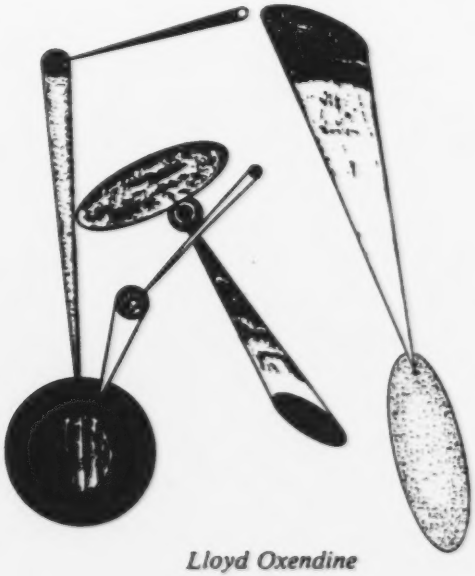
"Oh Tommy, come on now-" The boy trips away. The man slumps.

Clouds hide the little warmth shed by the sun and chill bumps cover the man's tanned arms. He distributes his weight to his legs and ambles down the crowded yet desolate sidewalk. The pigeons coo no last farewell; the children spare not even a passing glance.

Small steps bring him finally to his destination - a dilapidated, one room apartment above a renovated department store. He shuffles up the well -trodden stairway and reaches deep in his trouser pocket for a key. He stands in the doorway. Oh, the many trophies and awards that rest upon the mantel. He squints. "TO THE GREATEST IN BASEBALL'S HISTORY", each one is inscribed, but his name is hidden in layers of dust. Still, he stands proud. He looks at the yellowed photographs hanging on the walls. His wide blue eyes close as he struggles for his last breath.

An autographed baseball, grasped tightly in his hand, escapes his grip and falls loudly to the floor.

Lynn Graham



Lloyd Oxendine

IRA Literary Contest
Grades 9-12 Poetry Competition
First Place

Rose Garden

Morning mist is lifting
Sunlight spilling through
Petals unfold gently
Dampened with morning dew

A faint sound of footsteps
swift and light as streams
Approaches a girl of sixteen
sweet and sad like dreams

Roses pink and white
Blossom in blissful hue
But she only sees the thorns
That tear her heart in two

Her footsteps fade away
Reading much too soon
If only she had stopped
to see the roses bloom

Kristin Altman

IRA Literary Contest
Grades 9-12 Short Story Competition
First Place

Darkness Of Night

Standing outside in the cold, Ashley realized she had left her coat inside. Hastily, she dashed back into the clubhouse. She must have left it hanging in the closet. Old Thomas Potter, a little blind and more than a little deaf, was turning out the lights as she went in unnoticed. She found her coat as suddenly Mr. Potter switched off the light and locked the door then left. Ashley didn't notice his going--she put on her coat and turned to leave, running to the massive, oak doors which wouldn't open.

For the first time Ashley realized that Mr. Potter had gone and she was left alone in the empty clubhouse. She wasted time banging on the door and screaming for help. Finally, she ran down the red carpeted hall to the front porch. As she ran, she heard the last car pull away from the clubhouse. Its tires made the gravel grind under them and its headlights pierced the darkness like a yellow cat's eyes. She thought of her own car parked down the street waiting for her. Suddenly, the clouds swallowed the moon, leaving the building in darkness. A blue-white streak of lightning swept the porch followed by a crash of thunder. Rain attacked the window glass of the porch and wrapped her in its clear plastic-like sheets.

She sank, quivering, on a step and huddled there in a heap. Surely someone would come back and find her there. But why would they? She was staying home alone tonight so no one would notice her absence until her parents came home tomorrow morning. Nobody knew where she was--nobody would come back for her. She must stay here in this lonely black, echoing place--for now the building once alive with the party had become a ghostly place full of haunting terrors. There was no escape.

She put her hand out to grasp a stair rail and pull herself to her cramped feet. Her hand touched, not the rail, but something hairy. Ashley's shriek of horror froze on her lips. Padding footsteps passed down the steps beside her; a flash of lightning showed her, at the bottom of the steps, a huge, black dog. It was Mad Mr. Motley's dog! All at once she knew she was not alone! She turned and looked up. She stared with wild eyes into the darkness, but she could see nothing. Then she heard a low laugh above her--a laugh that almost made her heart stop beating--a very dreadful, inhuman laugh. She didn't need the lightning flash to tell her that Mad Mr. Motley was somewhere on the stairs above her. But, it came and she saw him. He was crouched five steps above her, with his grey head moving forwards. She

saw the frenzied gleam of his eyes, the fang-like yellow teeth showing in a horrible smile. The long, thin hand was outstretched towards her, its veins bulging beneath his skin.

Sheer panic shattered Ashley's trance. She bounced to her feet with a piercing scream of terror. She made a made spring down the stairs, rushed into the next room and up a row of chairs. She dove to the floor in a corner. Her body was bathed in an ice-cold sweat. She was in the grip of uncontrollable terror.

Moments passed that seemed like years. Then she heard footsteps that came and went and seemed to approach her slowly. Suddenly, she knew he was searching every group of tables and chairs set up from the party. He was looking for Annie, his long dead wife. He never harmed anyone, just held them, asking where they had been for so long.

A flash of lightning showed him entering the row of chairs where she was hiding. Ashley sprang up and rushed to the other side of the building. She hid again; he would search her out, but she could lose him again. This could go on all night and a madman's strength could outlast hers.

For what seemed like many hours, this game of hide-and-seek lasted. Time after time he hunted her out with cunning patience. Ashley hid behind chairs and tables, walls, and closets only to run again. The white taffeta of her dress made it hard for her to stay invisible long.

Ashley quickly darted behind one of the band's large speakers used that night. She twisted and tripped over a cord lying on the floor. The hem of her dress caught on the metal of the speaker and Mr. Motley came closer. With a frantic jerk her dress ripped free of the speaker and she ran towards the porch doors. In a final attempt she leaped towards the door, sprang through it, and slammed it in his face. At that moment the clouds broke and the porch filled with moonlight. Beside the door she saw a big, metal key hanging on the wall. She dashed at it and caught it as Mad Mr. Motley wrenched open the door and sprang into the glass porch, his dog following him. Ashley unlocked the outer door, stumbled out and locked the door behind her. She heard Mad Mr. Motley give an eerie shriek of despair as she escaped him.

As she turned back, she heard the cries of not a wild man, only a heart-broken man. "Where is Annie?" he cried. "I thought I had found her. Where is my Annie?"

Glancing again, she saw him tall and gaunt in his grey coat, with long white hair and beard, and an ageless search in his hollow, sunken eyes.

Ashley turned and ran to her car while his cries faded like old cloth. She quickly started the car and drove away, escaping the terrors of tonight.

Courtenay Bailey

IRA Literary Contest
Grades 9-12 Poetry Competition
Honorable Mention

Dead End

The gnarled hand reaches for me,
I jerk away into the maze,
Stifling air chokes my throat,
I clutch for escape.

Storming through the labyrinth
Jaws gnash behind me,
I feel the closeness of the body.
Thrashing my arms,
I find a dead end.

Mary Anne McDonald

IRA Literary Contest
Grades 9-12 Short Story Competition
Second Place

Best Of The Book
Short Story
Honorable Mention

Sublimal Perception

It was a dark night in the city; unusual for the small hometown in which Agnes had grown up. There had been few changes in the old town since she was a child--the same families lived in the same houses and the same people who prospered in the 50's, now prospered in the 80's.

Agnes slowed the car so she could take in the changes. She remembered dreaming of living in the country homes that lined Elm Street. Even more so, she remembered dreaming of passing through the intricate picket fence which once surrounded the old Milton House. But a Negro growing up in the South had not been permitted to visit the "rich white folks"--at least, that's what Pa had always told her. All her life, Agnes had felt protected, shielded. She had grown up holding her Pa's hand. Now, out on her own, she was free to explore the gaps in her past--she was free to explore the Old Milton House.

Her Pa had told her some things--like the reason some people must go through subliminal perception--"So's they can forgit thangs that happens to 'em--bad thangs." This is why Agnes felt she had to visit the old house--to find out what bad things had happened to her.

She signaled for a left turn and drove up the deserted road that led to the old Milton House. The road was dark--the brush overgrown. The moon shown just above the chimney as if the man-in-the-moon were a guard at San Quentin Prison. She turned off the ignition and sat in her car with the lights shining on the fence. Two or three posts now lay on the ground surrounded by cattails and weeds. Deep in thought, Agnes hadn't realized that she was now on the porch peering through the windows. She moved to the door, careful to miss the rotting boards.

The door easily opened with a firm twist of the handle and Agnes found herself in the foyer of what must have been a lovely home in its day. Her steps echoed through the lonely home--lingered til the end. Cobwebs strung across the ceiling housed a black widow stalking her prey. Dusty sheets covered the nineteenth century furniture. Agnes removed her gloves and placed them in the replica of Queen Ann's Chair.

The kitchen was much like the other rooms--dusty, unkept. In the sink, lines of rust covered the trails where streams of water used to flow.

Agnes ventured up the stairs and into all the bedrooms and the baths. But as she reached for the knob of the bedroom at the far end of the hall, a chill ran through her. Agnes gazed in on the room in disblief. It was as if someone has lived in the room all those years. The air was fresh and clean, not like the rest of the house. A new spread covered the bed and the blankets were pulled back as if someone was ready to go to sleep. Bookshelves which held fairy tale books, china dolls, and ribbons lined the walls. In front of the window something caught Agnes' eye. It was as if she were in a deja vu that was never ending. In a small rocking chair was a porcelain doll with pink cheeks and blond curly hair. She remembered the doll from her youth. As she held the doll, the memories of a childhood friend came back. A young white girl who had lived in the house. Milton was her name, Jessie Milton. But why had her father wanted her to forget Jessie?

Agnes began searching the room for anything that might help her to remember. The closet contained nothing but frilly dresses all in a line and ready to be worn. In the top drawer of the bureau, Agnes found ivory hair-pieces and tiny pieces of jewelry. The second drawer contained various per-fume bottles. In the third drawer, Agnes found a small diary. She tore the lock off and began skimming the pages.

She read the entries:

August 25:	Nothing exciting happened today.
August 30:	There was a new girl in school today--a nigger.
Sept. 3:	Daddy told me to invite the girl over for dinner. He said we're going to have to teach the niggers to stay out of this town. He said we're going to hurt them so that they will never mess with the white folks again.

For Agnes, the painful memories started coming back. She remembered the night she had come to the Milton House to have dinner. Afterwards, Jessie had taken her up to the room to show Agnes the pretty dolls. It was a warm Indian Summer night. The breeze felt refreshing coming in the open window. But then, Agnes had accidently dropped Jessie's favorite doll. Jessie began to get rough, pushing Agnes around the room while hollering something about her father being right, Niggers had no right in white folks' towns.

Agnes rememberd leaning out the window crying after Jessie had stormed out of the room.

"Why, Jessie? Why? You knew the window was open. Why, Jessie? Why couldn't you have pushed a little harder?"

Kelly Jewett

Best Of The Book
Poetry
Honorable Mention

The Dancer

From across a stale-smelling room,
muscles flex,
toes point,
feet arch to perfection.
To extend a leg just one...
more...inch.
Mirrored walls reflect faces,
hardened with determination.
Each knows only one can be the best,
the prima.
The dancer carries on a battle
within herself,
pushing harder,
farther,
reaching for the pinnacle.
Present is the pain,
but along with it,
the accomplishment.

Amy Biddell

IRA Literary Contest
Grades 9-12 Poetry Competition
Second Place

I Am A Rogue

I am a rogue
obscure to my fellow man
and he to me
In public I don't let on
I mimic and deceive
a hyprocrite by necessity
an actor on life's stage
But in my heart I know the
truth and it cuts me to the quick.
My friends all laugh
at the clown and weep for the
ibis red.
But I laugh when the artist floats
his mighty brush across the canvas
When I see his work complete
I stand to my feet in awe and weep
My companions do together sing in merry
chorus. But I to myself do hum a dirge
My neighbor looks out his window and is satisfied
by what he sees
I instead must dream:
I dream I am a leaf of grass and grow
within the sidewalk's crack oblivious to
the rich green fields.
If you too are like I am
then I am not alone. So write
it in the sky and you and
I will laugh and weep and hum
and dream. In the sky I'll
see your hand and know I'm
not alone. We two will
be one mind and two minds
free as the wind. We will
be rogues no more but instead
a brand new breed.

John Barrow

John Barrow

IRS Literary Contest
Grades 9-12 Poetry Compeition
Honorable Mentions

Self Portrait

Picture me not a free spirit
one with no cares or worries.
Picture me not a conservative
with rigid despair and actions.
Picture me a lame excuse for
the troubled youth of today.

Kim Ormand

Adorably dainty you say,
how now can this be so?
Why, he has such monsterous claws
and such gigantic eyes!
Those eyes are the mirrors of evil.
And how can you overlook those
large piercing teeth and that
whip-slapping tail.
I do not think he is adorably dainty-
but then what do I know about
hand-sculpted lions!

Susan Stevens

Best Of The Book
Poetry
Honorable Mention

La Plage

A noon sizzling beach,
roars of the whitecaps ring
drowning the scree of the diving gulls
Silhouettes of rocking shrimp boats
in rhythm with choppy waves.
Sand crabs skitter to steep caves,
the smell of bon fires at
midnight burns my nose.

Winter's hazy skies clear the
beach. Discovering a deserted home,
I reminisce
Listening to the sounds of summer.

Mary Anne McDonald

Tears of injustice spring forth
Through eyes of copper green.
The weary slowness of torture
Sends one over the fuzzy edge
Into an unknown abyss of the mind.

Kristian N. Allen

Best Of The Book
Poetry
Honorable Mention

February Oyster Roast

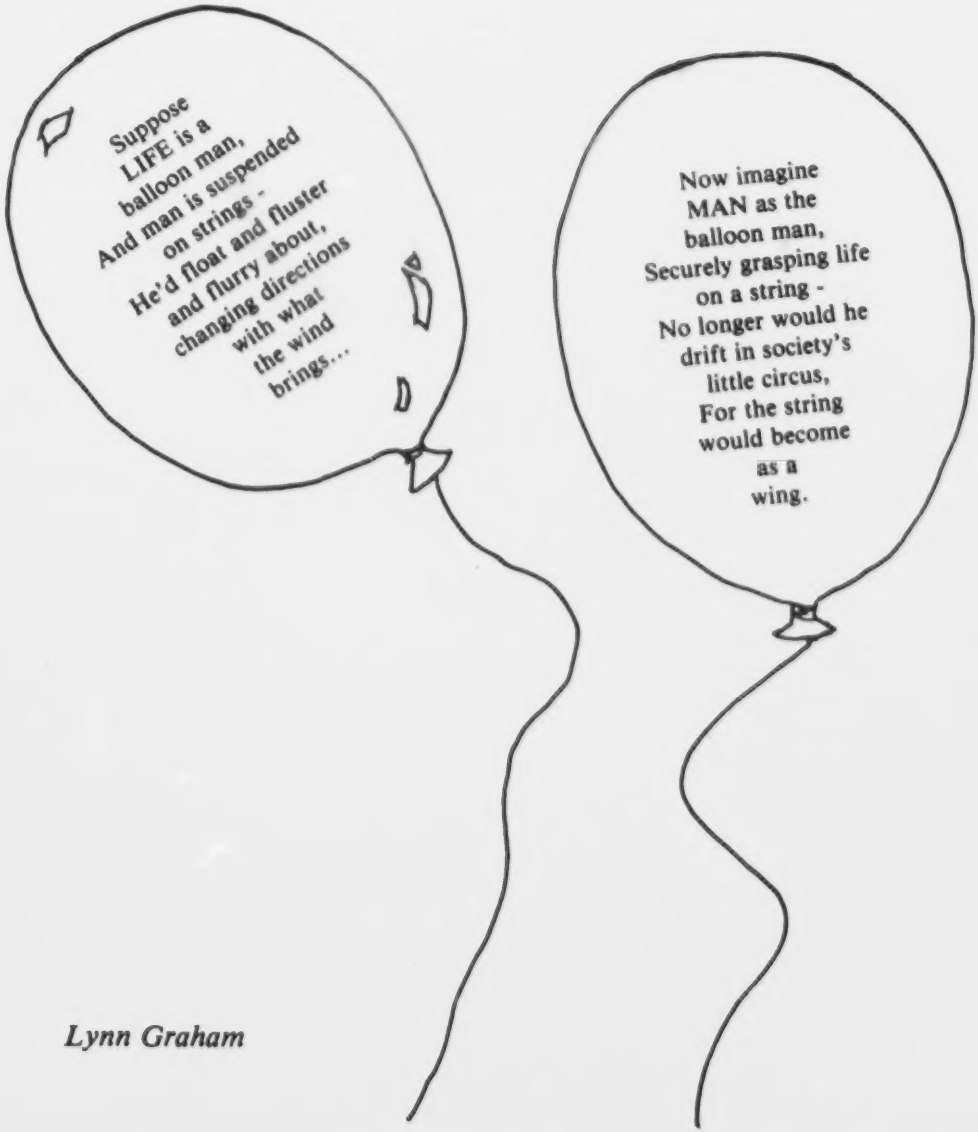
Twelve-thirty in the afternoon
Sun shines on a quiet backyard
By a smooth flowing creek
The fire is hot
The oysters are steaming
Mudhole holds up a string of crabs
Poses for a picture
Drops them in the pot
J.T. tells us we've "got a friend"
Mellow, mellow, mellow.
We talk in the house
We sing on the roof
We cut our souls on sharp shells
Find solace in black creek water
Everyone is eating oysters, drinking beer
Happy, happy, happy.
Jerry G. sings "Casey Jones"
We are all Dead heads
Sheer badly dressed Bohemians
Dancing on shells
Daffodils in our hair
No one matches, no one cares
We are
Together, together, together.

Kristian Allen

Best Of The Book

Poetry

Honorable Mention



Lynn Graham

Best Of The Book
Short Non-Fiction
Honorable Mention

Memories Of A Lost Childhood

I remember the joys and the pains of childhood and the way they affected my life. I remember growing up in Brooklyn, New York, during hard and depressing times. Visions of poor, hopeless people dance vividly in my mind. Busy streets filled with hustling citizens looked like colonies of ants from fifth story windows. Fumes from dozens of cars left a bitter-sweet smell in the air to the clustering pedestrains.

The smell of chicken, yams, peas, potatoes, and cornbread fill the deepest portions of my brain. Despite these few bright spots, little gremlins still occupied my childhood. Happiness was somewhat of a lost commodity during my stay in New York. Life never had any meaning until I began living with my grandmother. Mama, as she is called, cared for me and guided me as if I were her very own son. Gardens of adventure seemed to spring into my life like new flowers awaiting the warmth of spring.

Love and security began to take over where despair and anxiety had once reigned supreme. I remember the endless days spent in Grandma's garden picking peas, topping corn, and turning vines. Though it was hard work, it was work filled with love and happiness. One month with Grandma was worth the five years I spent in New York.

I remember my first puppy, a friendly little fellow named Jack. Visions of him and me frolicking in the backyard still linger in my mind. His fluffy brown body danced across the yard with effortless grace.

I remember the pain I felt when he was killed while playing out alongside the road. The sight of my special little friend lying lifeless in the road hurt beyond all comprehension. My life seemed empty without little Jack, and for a while I kept to myself. If it had not been for Grandma then and countless other times, I would have been utterly alone. No one has ever loved me and taken care of me the way that Grandma has, and it is doubtful anyone ever will. Even when I wasn't at my best, Grandma had a way of making me feel happy and loved.

These are the things about my childhood which I enjoyed most. These days held much happiness for me, and it is something I can reflect on today and cherish tomorrow.

Milton Cousar

Butterfly

If I were a floating butterfly
with wings of lavender,
would you delight in my fairness
and rejoice in my freedom,

or

would you capture
me in a mayonnaise jar?

Shari Barfield

The Secret

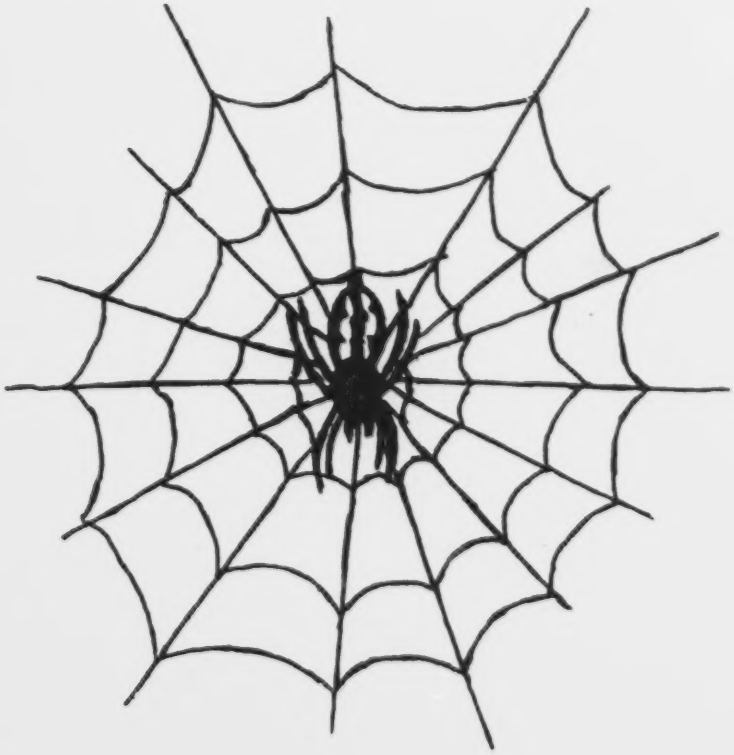
The visage of a comic clown,
displays a jovial nature.
But hidden beneath the mask there lies,
a dismal soul of mortal man.

Carol McKay

Web Making

The large agile spider dangles from its towline planning his project. He starts in the corner setting up necessary guide-lines from which his web will hang. He mocks the technique of a trapeze artist, swinging from guide-line to guide-line securing each with a sturdy piece of webbing, until the likeness of a crooked circle is evident. With each revolution around the web, the circle gets smaller and neater. The completion of the web brings about its inspection. Tightropingly, the nimble spider promenades each line of webbing searching for defects. After the inspection, the deceptive spider cunningly conceals himself in green foliage. He waits. Sudden convulsions overcome the web. Knowing that his creation has served its purpose, the ecstatic spider pounces on his prey.

Donald Nisbett



Traveler

I was once walking
on life's road by day
when guilt stepped behind me
And followed my way.

He whispered to me
And scraped at my back
As if to remind me
Of my long journey back.

I kept on walking
Ignoring his shade
He faded away
Pride began to show.

Pride followed closer
than guilt had before.
He strove to pass me
I knew what for.

You see, Pride gets ahead
While Guilt stays behind
And when they confront you
They control all your mind.

I continued my journey
unknowing, unwise.
Understanding walked with me
And opened my eyes.

I had carried my burdens
Too far and too long.
My thoughts were distorted
From right into wrong.

Understanding guided my path
To where Truth was to be.
I had conquered my goals
And found Destiny.

Tammy Batts

Salt

Your sweet talk don't cause me no pain
So let your bullets fly like rain
Into a river of G.I. Joes where
one discovers Hasbro has pain
and destruction for sale.

Living bad memories at no extra charge,
four ninety-five, no refund
and you never pay it off
it comes with a lifetime
Guarantee.

Ray Bowen

For Those Who Hurt, Too

"Him be cool"
He slides in at 8:08
Hat brim turned to the side
Sheepish grin trimming his face.
Too cool to come unraveled
Too cool to be cool
Talking: "man", "that jam"
"I'm chill." "What's up",
He seeks to hide poverty
behind his ice box cool.
He lies, to cover pain.
He hungers for acceptance
despite his color,
his secret shame.

Barbara Campbell

First Born

Here
In this room
In my heart
I stitch memories--
Dry gray-brown
Driftwood from
A river-Sunday
Golden brown deer
Crucified
On a boy-blue wall
Silver sign
Proclaiming "Michelob Light"
Blond silk
Tanned skin and
Pink bikini
Becoming in print
Spread blue-brown wings
And green head
Frozen in flight
Tall chrome
Announcing "First"

In the race
Mahogany holding
Long ominous barrels
Here

Where
Are the eyes of devil-brown
The cheeks of sun-red
The smile of infant-pink?
Where is my restless one?

There, there--
The horizon-shadow,
Infinite frontiers
Before him.

Godspeed, my son.

Gwyn Harris

Donald Clark

To Lynn

We skittered around the desert,
the teacup and I,
trying to find a catus
to make love to.
We found none;
settled on a porcupine.
We tripped on a cat that wasn't there
and fell into her kittens.
We killed them,
shoving our thumbs
into their throats.
Mr. American Standard swallowed
the one that looked like me only
Because I killed the one
that looked like the cactus.
Later in laughter, the Grim Reaper and I
threw babies into the streets

Ray Bowen

Complete Understanding

Changeless
time
becomes
altered
before
eyes
and we
understand

Paul Bullard

Trapped

Musty earth crumbling down upon me,
Gnawing at my flesh as I grope along,
Nostrils burning on acid air.
Itching skin, scratchy throat, a choking blackened face.
I scramble to my feet, stumble forward dizzily,
A grey hue magnetizing my body from yards away.
Sand streams through the hourglass,
Crash; earthly whispers; trapped.

Dan Wilkes

Belle

Weep, O' sacred one,
for you are the divine of the mourners.
Whalebone dry kerchief,
dry wetness.
Everyone's watching,
expecting.
Kneel, old fool,
for the loved,
cursed,
hated
Belle lies.
Still.
Prisms of mass confusion
White under veils of black.

Angie Burgin

Blue Moon

Scarlet chiffon
Faded rose chiffon
Scratching
For the silted panes.
Sands tricking
From the cracked
Hourglass.

Against the mirror
No Breath
No Life
Only the staccato of pearls
Against the roof

Tammy Batts

The heavy darkness of the night
encloses me like a cage.
I am confined
within my mind.
Even though the door remains ajar
I have not enough strength left
to crawl away.
  It will follow me wherever
I go
like a bird of prey
watching, and waiting
to attack.

Julie Bush

Bird Of Prey

A silver bird of prey circles the
earth, watching for a place to pounce
Looking, finding, she flies
in low and
drops
her egg of destruction

A fountain of fire
erupts
from her nest as
she soars away.

Keith Burns

The Dreamer

There he sits
a smile on his face
willing to sacrifice
everything
to follow a dream
to capture a cloud
and be caught up
in mystical fantasies
forever in love
with things he
will never hold.

Peggy Thames

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